

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the rejections set forth in the Office action dated 3/10/2005 is respectfully requested under the provisions of 37 CFR §1.111(b).

Claims 1-50 are pending.

Claims 1-50 have been rejected.

Claims 14 and 39 were amended. Method claim 14 was amended to correct a spelling error. System claim 39 was amended to depend from system claim 26 instead of system claim 37. The scope of currently amended system claim 39 now is consistent with the scope of the corresponding, currently amended, method claim 14.

Applicant asserts that these amendments were not made to overcome any prior art but were made to further clarify the claimed subject matter.

I. Rejections under 35 USC §102(b)

Claims 1-50 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as anticipated by Reed et al. (US 5,862,325).

A prima facie case of anticipation is established when the Examiner provides a single reference that teaches or enables each of the claimed elements (arranged as in the claim) expressly or inherently as interpreted by one of ordinary skill in the art.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 1-50 as a prima facie case has not been established.

Original claim 1 is directed to a method and claims:

A method for managing and tracking information items within an message-based system on a user system, the message-based system having a viewer, the method comprising the operations of:

- (a) generating a thrask, the thrask including at least one information item having a set of metadata;
- (b) sorting a new information item into the thrask in accordance with at least one criterion; and
- (c) displaying the thrask and at least one of the metadata of one of the information items in the thrask in the viewer.

The claims use the term “thrask” throughout. This term is a term created by the inventors and has no other definition known to the applicant (Thrask is not a word contained in Webster’s 3rd New International Dictionary unabridged ©1976 and is not known to dictionary.com as of June, 2005. Thrask is defined starting at page 5 line 17, and extending to page 7, line 15. In addition, the term “thrask” is used throughout the application within the context of the TaskMaster embodiment.

It is the person of ordinary skill in the field of the invention through whose eyes the claims are construed. Such person is deemed to read the words used in the patent documents with an understanding of their meaning in the field, and to have knowledge of any special meaning and usage in the field. The inventor's words that are used to describe the invention – the inventor's lexicography – must be understood and interpreted by the court as they would be understood and interpreted by a person in that field of technology. Thus the court starts the decision making process by reviewing the same resources as would that person, viz., the patent specification and the prosecution history. These documents have legal as well as technological content, for they show not only the framework of the invention as viewed by the inventor, but also the issues of patentability as viewed by the patent examiner. *Multiform Desiccants, Inc. v. Medzam, Ltd.*, 133 F.3d 1473, 45 USPQ2d 1429, 1432 (Fed. Cir. 1998)

Those skilled in the art have started to use the term “thrask” subsequent to publication of a paper (*Taking Email to Task: The Design and Evaluation of a Task Management Centered Email Tool*, Bellotti, et al., CHI 2003 April 5-10, 2003) authored by some of the inventors. For example, please refer to the following papers that are attached to the office action.

- Michael J. Muller , Werner Geyer , Beth Brownholtz , Eric Wilcox , David R. Millen, *One-hundred days in an activity-centric collaboration environment based on shared objects*, Proceedings of the 2004 conference on Human factors in computing systems, p.375-382, April 24-29, 2004, Vienna, Austria;

- Werner Geyer , Jürgen Vogel , Li-Te Cheng , Michael Muller, *Supporting activity-centric collaboration through peer-to-peer shared objects*, Proceedings of the 2003 international ACM SIGGROUP conference on Supporting group work, November 09-12, 2003, Sanibel Island, Florida, USA;
- Victor M. González , Gloria Mark, "Constant, constant, multi-tasking craziness": managing multiple working spheres, Proceedings of the 2004 conference on Human factors in computing systems, p.113-120, April 24-29, 2004, Vienna, Austria

These papers are included for the sole purpose of showing that the term “thrask” currently has meaning to one skilled in the art and that such a one understands that a thrask is different from a “task” or “thread”.

Looking now to the section 2 of the office action and at the rejection of claim 1:

In this rejection, the office action has not clearly designated the particular part of the cited art (Reed), nor has the pertinence of the reference been clearly explained as is required by 37 CFR 1.104(c)(2).

When a reference is complex or shows or describes inventions other than that claimed by the applicant, the particular part relied on must be designated as nearly as practicable. The pertinence of each reference, if not apparent, must be clearly explained and each rejected claim specified. 37 CFR 1.104(c)(2).

Applicant believes the Examiner may not have understood the meaning of the term “thrask” and that, after reading the previous discussion related to that term, will understand that one skilled in the art would understand that a “thrask” is broader than “(thread(s) & task(s))”. The 160 column Reed reference is clearly complex. The office action has not explained the pertinence of this reference to claim 1. Applicant agrees that tasks and threads were well known in the art at the time of the invention. But again points out that the concept of a thrask was novel in the art at the time of the invention.

With regards to the reference “(1401 \leftrightarrow 1424; fig. 29A)” that appears to be applied to the “set of metadata”. Reed at column 117, line 67 to column 118, line 21

describes the metadata aspects of Fig. 29A. Applicant agrees that the concept of metadata was well known in the art at the time of the invention. However, because the thrask concept is novel, “generating a thrask, the thrask including at least one information item having a set of metadata” is also novel.

With regards to the reference “(22; via e-mail)” applicant assumes the office action is refereeing to figure 22. Figure 22 “illustrates a user interface display of a form for creating notification elements in the provider program” (column 10, line 64). Figure 22 is described starting at column 63, line 64. Applicant agrees that the concept of inputting information as criteria was well known in the art at the time of the invention. However, because the thrask concept is novel, “sorting a new information item into the thrask in accordance with at least one criterion” is also novel.

With regard to “(22; “consumer program operation”; “consumer computer”)”, because the thrask concept is novel, “displaying the thrask and at least one of the metadata of one of the information items in the thrask in the viewer” is also novel.

Thus, **original claim 1** is not anticipated and applicant accordingly traverses the rejection.

With regards to **original claims 2-17**, these all claim aspects of the operation and/or use of thrasks. Because the thrask concept is novel, these claims are also not anticipated and applicant accordingly traverses the rejection.

Original claims 26-38, currently amended claims 39, and original claims 40-42 are also not anticipated for the previously presented reasons and applicant accordingly traverses the rejection.

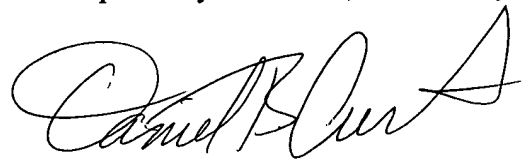
Since all rejections, objections and requirements contained in the outstanding official action have been fully answered or traversed and shown to be inapplicable to the present claims, it is respectfully submitted that reconsideration is now in order under the provisions of 37 CFR §1.111(b) and such reconsideration is respectfully requested. Upon reconsideration, it is also respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance and such action is therefore respectfully requested.

PATENT

The undersigned Xerox Corporation attorney hereby authorizes the charging of any necessary fees, other than the issue fee, to Xerox Corporation Deposit Account No. 24-0025. This also constitutes a request for any needed extension of time and authorization to charge all fees therefor to Xerox Corporation Deposit Account No. 24-0025.

Should any additional issues remain, or if I can be of any additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at (650) 812-4259.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel B. Curtis", written in a cursive style.

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